

Orchards school crossing guard saves the day; Ben Hull jumps between student and speeding car

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LEWISTON - Tragedy was narrowly averted Wednesday morning when a crossing guard for Orchards Elementary School in Lewiston stepped between a child and an oncoming car.

Ben Hull, who was standing at Thain and Burrell, noticed the car was going too fast to stop at the intersection where children were crossing shortly after 8 a.m. Wednesday, said Orchards Principal Kristy Brinkerhoff.

"It's a good reason for having crossing guards," the principal said. "Somebody was going too fast and not paying attention."

Hull stepped out in front of the car and it stopped in time, but it missed hitting him by only inches. Brinkerhoff said nobody was hurt in the incident.

Passersby who witnessed the scene called a local radio station and another person relayed the news to the school, Brinkerhoff said.

"We were unaware of it until then," she said.

"(Hull) was still on the job. So I went out and thanked him."

Some fifth-grade students at the school also thanked Hull, who has been a crossing guard at Orchards for five years. They created a large poster for him that read: "Ben, Our Superhero," and presented it to him just before school was out Wednesday.

Brinkerhoff said she hopes the incident is a reminder to people there are crossing guards posted at every intersection near the public schools in the morning, at noon and after 3 p.m. when classes are dismissed.

"We want this to help awareness for drivers to please slow down and help us keep kids safe," Brinkerhoff said. "We need their help."